

November 2003

1.11

Persuasive

Benchmarks

In persuasive writing, students judge, propose, and persuade. This is evident when students:

5-8:

- A. Clearly define a significant problem, issue, topic, or concern;
- B. Make an assertion or judgment, or propose one or more solutions;
- C. Support proposals, as appropriate, through definitions, descriptions, illustrations, examples from experience, and anecdotes; and
- D. Engage the reader by anticipating shared concerns and stressing their importance, discussing the pros and cons of alternatives, and addressing the reader's potential doubts and criticisms.

9-12: Evidence 5 – 8 applies, plus -

- E. Take authoritative stand on topic;
- F. Support the statement with sound reasoning; and
- G. Use a range of strategies to elaborate and persuade.

5th Grade Benchmarks

Dear Mr. Tullock	5 / 3
Homework: How Much Is Enough	4 / 3
Trying to convince Someone Not To Smoke	3 / 2
I Want to Play my Game Boy	2 / 2
Every one Should Play a Sport	1 / 2

Vermont Department of Education
VERMONT NEW STANDARDS RUBRIC FOR
PERSUASIVE WRITING: WRITING TO PROPOSE OR PERSUADE
 Standard 1.11 In persuasive writing, students judge, propose, and persuade.

Criteria	Score Point 5 Exceeds the Standard	Score Point 4 Accomplished Writing	Score Point 3 Intermediate Writing	Score Point 2 Basic Writing	Score Point 1 Limited Writing
PURPOSE POSITION Topic and Context Focus (Thesis or Controlling Idea)	Score point 5 meets all the criteria of score point 4. In addition, a paper receiving this score presents unusually perceptive arguments/ reasons with richly elaborated supporting details.	Establishes and maintains a clear topic. Asserts and maintains a clear position/focus throughout the piece (purpose). Establishes context for the presentation of ideas (purpose).	States a clear topic (purpose). Establishes a position/ focus (purpose). Establishes a context. May have some digressions.	Topic may be unclear (purpose). Position/focus unclear (purpose). Establishes little or no context. May meander or contain digressions.	Topic is absent or may be difficult to discern (purpose). No position/ focus (purpose). No context. May be rambling, long, and unfocused.
VOICE/TONE (Stance) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of gathered information Analysis of a situation followed by a suggested course of action Consideration or rebuttal of opposing arguments Appropriate stance 	Such papers use language selected with careful attention to persuasive appeal. Writers show confidence, conviction, and enthusiasm. May present ideas in unusual or surprising patterns.	Uses precise language effectively and purposefully (voice/tone). Conveys conviction voice/ tone).	Uses appropriate language, but may lack precision (voice/ tone). Usually conveys a sense of conviction (voice/ tone).	Language is predictable and general rather than precise (voice/ tone). May lack conviction (voice/ tone).	Language may be inappropriate or inexact (voice/ tone).
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate patterns; specific to general; general to specific; causal; sequential; other, appropriate to author's point of view Overall Coherence 	Writers argue effectively for their positions or use reasons effectively. Such papers are usually insightful in anticipating and addressing possible reader concerns. Embeds prior knowledge, personal experience, and/or reflection into fabric of argument.	Arranges arguments, reasons, and/or evidence effectively and persuasively. Transitions, when used, are effective (organization). Strong introduction and conclusion (organization). Develops position through detailed arguments and reasons.	Possesses overall coherence, but cohesion between sentences or paragraphs may be weak. Arranges ideas in simple ways, listing without relating them to each other. May have weak transitions (organization). May lack effective beginning or ending (organization). States appropriate arguments or reasons.	May possess simple, straightforward organization. May lack transitions (organization). May lack a clear beginning or ending (organization). Reasons are thinly developed.	Shows little logical arrangement of ideas. May be too brief to discern a pattern of organization. Uses few or no supporting ideas.
ELABORATION STRATEGIES/ DETAIL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depth and density of arguments or reasons Relevance of arguments or reasons Audience awareness 	These exceptional papers show a flair for persuasion resulting from interesting ideas expressed in an original way.	Provides a variety of strategies: examples, anecdotes, and other kinds of information. Shows credibility and authenticity. Anticipates and addresses possible reader concerns, misconceptions, or counter arguments.	Provides some supporting evidence for arguments or reasons. Assumes that readers will find the ideas credible. May offer scant or superficial evidence of audience awareness	Presents some information, but may lack elaboration. May contain irrelevant or inappropriate details or examples. Usually does not reflect an awareness of the reader's needs.	Rarely any awareness of reader's needs.

This rubric is adapted from materials created by the New Standards Project.

PERSUASIVE

Persuasive: Standard 1.11 In persuasive writing, students judge, propose, persuade. This is evident when students: (5 – 8) **a.** Clearly define a significant problem, issue, topic, or concern; **b.** Make an assertion or judgement, or propose one or more solutions; **c.** Support proposals, as appropriate, through definitions, descriptions, illustrations, examples from experience, and anecdotes; **d.** Engage the reader by anticipating shared concerns and stressing their importance, discussing the pros and cons of alternatives, and addressing the reader’s potential doubts and criticisms; (9 – 12) **e.** Take an authoritative stand on a topic; **f.** Support the statement with sound reasoning; and **g.** Use a range of strategies to elaborate and persuade.

PERSUASIVE – Persuasive writing is writing that aims at convincing people to accept a point of view, to change their minds about something or to act in a certain way. A persuasive essay is a form of writing in which a writer supports an opinion and tries to persuade an audience.

GLOSSARY

Antithesis - A contrast or opposition of thought, the opposite. It usually appears in two phrases, clauses, or sentences (Ex: “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” I am going; you are coming.) However, in persuasive writing it is the idea that every argument generates a counter argument. Opposing arguments should be addressed in good persuasive writing.

Coherence – The arrangement of ideas in such a way that the reader can easily follow from one point to another. When all the ideas are logically integrated, arranged, connected, and clearly articulated, a piece of quality writing has coherence.

Context – The set of facts or circumstances that establish the importance of the writer’s is a point of view.

Counter Argument – see antithesis

Elaboration – The development and expansion of ideas and arguments. Both logical (evidence, reasons, facts and statistics) and emotional appeals can be used.

Focus – The concentration on an aspect of a specific topic.

Purpose – The basic purpose of a persuasive piece is to convince someone else to act or think in a certain way.

Stance – The attitude or position the author has adopted.

Tone – The writer’s attitude toward a subject.

Thesis – A statement of purpose or intent. It is the writer’s controlling idea about the topic.

Topic – The subject covered in a piece of writing.

Voice – The style and quality of the writing. Voice portrays the author’s personality or the personality of a chosen persona. A distinctive voice establishes personal expression and enhances the writing.

Dear Mr. Tullock

George Tullock
R.M.S. Titanic Co.
New York, NY

Dear Mr. Tullock,

I am writing to you because I don't think you are right about taking things from the Titanic. Other people want to see her, it is true, but I don't think any other artifacts should be recovered because I think the Titanic is a grave site. Grave sites should be respected because they are personal.

I also think you should stop recovering items because it is far more emotional to see Titanic in the proper position as sunk. When you remove artifacts from the wreck of the Titanic you are altering the ship. Items that have been in the exact same position, since the night of the tragedy 85 years ago, are powerful. Removing rings, leather suitcases, preserved papers, plates, or pieces of metal from the sea bed, cleaning them and placing them in a glass case isn't nearly as impressive as seeing a video of where and how they exactly came to rest. Also, now that you've altered the wreck, I don't think other people will be able to see her as she was *meant* to be. In addition, I think that your ownership of the relics, although granted by law, isn't right. The whole world should own Titanic because the whole world has mourned her loss.

I do, however, think there are some good things about bringing valuables to the surface. You are correct in your belief that 85 years from now Titanic will be gone. We should preserve some of her for history. These recovered items should go in museums through out the world. Future inhabitants of the world should get some hint as to what life was like during the greatest marine tragedy of all time. These items should be non personal though. It would not be right to take something personal, such as a ring, from where it settled to rest on the dead. I would not appreciate anyone removing something personal from my family's grave, even if it were for

historical reasons.

I understand that you are in a difficult position, I would ask one favor though. Please treat Titanic with respect. The artifact recovery you've done already is enough. Let the souls of those who died rest in peace, and preserve what's already been altered for the benefit of future generations. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dear Mr. Tullock

***1.11 Persuasive
Grade 5
Score 5 / 3***

George Tullock
R.M.S. Titanic Co.
New York, NY

Dear Mr. Tullock,

I am writing to you because I don't think you are right about taking things from the Titanic. Other people want to see her, it is true, but I don't think any other artifacts should be recovered because I think the Titanic is a grave site. Grave sites should be respected because they are personal.

Position clearly stated

I also think you should stop recovering items because it is far more emotional to see Titanic in the proper position as sunk. When you remove artifacts from the wreck of the Titanic you are altering the ship. Items that have been in the exact same position, since the night of the tragedy 85 years ago, are powerful. Removing rings, leather suitcases, preserved papers, plates, or pieces of metal from the sea bed, cleaning them and placing them in a glass case isn't nearly as impressive as seeing a video of where and how they exactly came to rest. Also, now that you've altered the wreck, I don't think other people will be able to see her as she was *meant* to be. In addition, I think that your ownership of the relics, although granted by law, isn't right. The whole world should own Titanic because the whole world has mourned her loss.

Supports position with reasons/arguments that are well-elaborated

Insightful and convincing

I do, however, think there are some good things about bringing valuables to the surface. You are correct in your belief that 85 years from now Titanic will be gone. We should preserve some of her for history. These recovered items should go in museums through out the world. Future inhabitants of the world should get some hint as to what life was like during the greatest marine tragedy of all time. These items should be non personal though. It would not be right to take something personal, such as a ring, from where it settled to rest on the dead. I would not appreciate anyone removing something personal from my family's grave, even if it

Insightful way of addressing concerns of this particular audience (Mr. Tullock)

were for historical reasons.

I understand that you are in a difficult position, I would ask one favor though. Please treat Titanic with respect. The artifact recovery you've done already is enough. Let the souls of those who died rest in peace, and preserve what's already been altered for the benefit of future generations. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Strong conclusion

Score Point 5

This piece takes a clear position and explains it persuasively and convincingly. The arguments and reasons the writer uses to support that position are well-elaborated and insightful. The writer has carefully taken his audience (Mr. Tullock) into account, and his reasonable stance and thoughtful points reflect that awareness.

Conventions 3

This piece shows grade-level control of conventions.

Homework: How much is enough??

Recently our class read an article in the Time for Kids Magazine. The title was “Too Much Homework!?” and it was about how much homework kids are doing today. It said that 100 years ago, kids never had any homework because they had to work on their farms or do chores for their families.

But in the 1950’s, American kids began to score really low on math and science tests. Other countries were doing better than we were. Teachers thought that since their students were getting low grades, they should do some homework to practice and catch up to the rest of the world. Since then students have been getting more and more homework and it doesn’t look like that is going to change. I think that students should have enough homework, but still have time for fun. So, students in third grade should start having 15 minutes a night and work up to a little over an hour by the sixth grade.

One reason to have homework is kids can become more responsible. For example, if someone usually forgets a due date, he can practice remembering and using an assignment book to help him remember his homework. When kids grow up and get a job, they will have deadlines to meet and homework is good practice for that.

Another reason to have homework is a kid can become faster at doing his work. If he needs to practice multiplication he can do that at home better than at school. Also, some kids who have big projects or posters would rather work where it is quiet and they can concentrate better. Also, long searches on the Internet are done at home easier than at school because you can be comfortable at home and you don’t have a schedule to keep.

These are the reasons why I think students in third grade should start having 15 minutes a night and work up to a little over an hour by the sixth grade. If you agree with what I have said you should write a letter to A----- School addressed to the Superintendent and Principal so she can show it to the School Board. Thank you for your support.

1.11 Persuasive
Grade 5
Score 4 / 3

Homework: How much is enough??

Recently our class read an article in the Time for Kids Magazine. The title was “Too Much Homework!?” and it was about how much homework kids are doing today. It said that 100 years ago, kids never had any homework because they had to work on their farms or do chores for their families.

Context established

But in the 1950’s, American kids began to score really low on math and science tests. Other countries were doing better than we were. Teachers thought that since their students were getting low grades, they should do some homework to practice and catch up to the rest of the world. Since then students have been getting more and more homework and it doesn’t look like that is going to change. I think that students should have enough homework, but still have time for fun. So, students in third grade should start having 15 minutes a night and work up to a little over an hour by the sixth grade.

Provides short history of homework as background/context

Asserts clear position/ focus

One reason to have homework is kids can become more responsible. For example, if someone usually forgets a due date, he can practice remembering and using an assignment book to help him remember his homework. When kids grow up and get a job, they will have deadlines to meet and homework is good practice for that.

First argument supporting position, with elaboration

Another reason to have homework is a kid can become faster at doing his work. If he needs to practice multiplication he can do that at home better than at school. Also, some kids who have big projects or posters would rather work where it is quiet and they can concentrate better. Also, long searches on the Internet are done at home easier than at school because you can be comfortable at home and you don’t

Additional arguments supporting position, with examples

have a schedule to keep.

These are the reasons why I think students in third grade should start having 15 minutes a night and work up to a little over an hour by the sixth grade. If you agree with what I have said you should write a letter to A----- School addressed to the Superintendent and Principal so she can show it to the School Board. Thank you for your support.

Restates position

Concludes with a call to action

Score Point 4

This piece takes a clear position and supplies arguments to support that position. In addition, it adds good background/context for the argument that follows. Although the piece does not address the counter-argument (“Some people say kids shouldn’t have homework, and here’s why they’re wrong”), the reasons/arguments supplied are adequate. The piece concludes effectively with a call to action.

Conventions 3

This piece shows grade-level control of conventions.

Trying To Convince Someone Not To Smoke

I am trying to convince a friend not to smoke. My first reason is it's bad for you. My second reason is it's expensive. My third reason is it's social pressure.

It's bad for you. You could get cancer. Smoking takes away your appetite and you don't eat as much. Smoking will make you have bad breath and teeth. Smoking is addicting.

It's expensive. Medical care for your health will cost a lot because it's addicting. Dental care will cost a lot of money for your teeth because the tar in cigarettes make your teeth black. The cost of the habit is over one thousand dollars a year.

Social pressure makes Cigarette advertisements make smoking look harmless and fun. Some advertisements help you stop. There are warning labels saying that if you're pregnant your baby could probably have birth weight. The labels are called Surgeon General Warnings. Just because someone you know or like smokes don't mean you have to smoke.

I never want to smoke and I hope you feel the same way. I hope you make the right choice and save money.

**1.11 Persuasive
Grade 5
Score - 3 / 2**

No context

Trying To Convince Someone Not To Smoke

Clear focus

I am trying to convince a friend not to smoke. My first reason is it's bad for you. My second reason is it's expensive. My third reason is it's social pressure.

It's bad for you. You could get cancer. Smoking takes away your appetite and you don't eat as much. Smoking will make you have bad breath and teeth. Smoking is addicting.

Details are listed but do support focus

It's expensive. Medical care for your health will cost alot because it's addicting. Dental care will cost alot of money for your teeth because the tar in cigarettes make your teeth black. The cost of the habit is over one thousand dollars a year.

Tone is not convincing; assumes reader will find ideas credible.

Social pressure makes Cigarette advertisements make smoking look harmless and fun. Some advertisements help you stop. There are warning labels saying that if you're pregnant your baby could probably have birth weight. The labels are called Surgeon General Warnings. Just because someone you know or like smokes don't mean you have to smoke.

Writer loses control of focus; these are not reasons, but information related to tonic

I never want to smoke and I hope you feel the same way. I hope you make the right chose and save money.

Conclusion is weak

Score Point 3

This piece takes a clear position against smoking and supplies two reasons in support. (The third, social pressure, is not really a reason, but rather one cause of the problem.) Each of the two reasons is elaborated with some information/details. However, the information is listed, not developed. The tone is appropriate but not convincing, and the conclusion is weak.

Conventions 2

This piece shows inconsistent control of conventions. There are a variety of errors - omitted words, usage errors, a capitalization error, and a couple of spelling errors.

I Want To Play My Game Boy.

I want to tell you how bad not being able to play my Game Boy during free time in school is. I get my work done for them and then I have nothing to do so I get in trouble for talking. I would turn the volume down and play my game quietly. I wouldn't beg anybody and so I wouldn't get in trouble. It may rot your brain but there is always time to learn stuff over again. I dislike not being able to play my Game Boy in our spare time.

I think it's bad because we slave over doing our work for them and they can't even let us play our Game Boy.

I would appreciate it if we could play our Game Boy after doing our work because we only get a seven minute recess.

I want to play my Game Boy because I like it. If you have a problem with it go KICK A Tree!

I just told you about how bad not being able to play our Game Boy during Free time is. I always get in trouble for talking. We should be able to play our Game Boy.

**1.11 Persuasive
Grade 5
Score 2 / 2**

I Want To Play My Game Boy.

No context

I want to tell you how bad not being able to play my Game Boy during free time in school is. I get my work done for them and then I have nothing to do so I get in trouble for talking. I would turn the volume down and play my game quietly. I wouldn't beg anybody and so I wouldn't get in trouble. It may rott your brain but there is always time to learn stuff over again.

Takes clear position

I dislike not being able to play my Game Boy in our spare time.

I think it's bad becuase we slave over doing our work for them and they can't even let us play our Game Boy.

Attempts to support position with some reasons, but reasons are very general

Repeats position over and over without further development of reasons

I would appreciate it if we could play our Game Boy after doing our work becuase we only get a seven minute recess.

I want to play my Game Boy becuase I like it. If you have a problem with it go KICK A TRee!

Irrelevant and inappropriate detail

Repeats position again

I just told you about how bad not being able to play our Game Boy during Free time is. I always get in trouble for talking. We should be able to play our Game Boy.

Score Point 2

In this piece the writer takes a clear position about which s/he feels strongly. However, s/he does not develop with reasons or arguments, instead relying on repetition and insulting those who might disagree with him/her. The writing has a simple, straightforward pattern of organization and no context. The result of all of these factors is a paper which is unpersuasive.

Conventions 2

This piece shows inconsistent control of conventions. In a very short piece, there are several spelling, capitalization, and formatting errors (spacing).

Every one Should Play A Sport

Everyone should play a sport because it is healthy for you and it keeps you in shape and keeps you strong.

Football is one of the toughest sports. People get hurt. What makes it hard is it is tackle football. You will make new freinds and be a teammember.

1.11 Persuasive
Grade 5
Score 1 / 2

Every one Should Play A Sport

No context

Everyone should play a sport because it is healthy for you and it keeps you in shape and keeps you strong.

Takes a position, lists two brief, general reasons

Football is one of the toughest sports. People get hurt. What makes it hard is it is tackle football. You will make new freinds and be a teammember.

Digresses to different topic

No conclusion

Score Point 1

The writer attempts to take a position in this piece and even gives two reasons in attempted support. However, s/he then switches to a related but different topic, football. The piece is so brief and has so little information that it is impossible to discern any pattern of organization. Sentences are very simple and basic.

Conventions 2

This piece shows inconsistent control of conventions. In a very brief piece, there are several spelling errors.